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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/176,315	10/22/1998	SHIGENOBU MAEDA	0057-2362-2Y	8038

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EXAMINER

CRANE, SARA W

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2811

DATE MAILED: 01/14/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

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Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/176,315

Applicant(s)

MAEDA ET AL.

Examiner

Sara W. Crane

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 October 2002.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 17 and 20 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 6-16 and 19 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 20. 6) ☐ Other:

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-5 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Iwamatuse et al. in view of Agair and Chen et al., and also in view of Blake et al., Gunning, and Masuda et al.

The rejection is based on the reasoning set forth in the Office action of 20 December 2000. The references of Blake et al., Gunning, and Masuda et al., are relied upon for definitions and reasons as noted in the Office action of 20 May 2002.

Applicant's arguments as submitted 21 October 2002 have been carefully considered, but are not convincing. Applicant argues primarily that the "body link" of Chen et al. is not a link between the body of the Chen transistors and the substrate contact 39, as shown in Chen figure 3 and discussed at column 5, lines 25-30. Examiner disagrees. Chen figure 1 shows a "recessed region at 20," and Chen figure 3 makes it clear that the recessed portion of the device extends from all of the transistor body regions (underlying the gate electrodes of the transistor) to contacts 39, and not simply between two transistors as shown in the partial drawing of figure 1.

Applicant also argues that consideration of structural elements is somehow improper, because the claims at issue here are drawn to a method of designing. Each of the method steps is expressed in terms of the specific structure contemplated. The steps are set forth using terms such as "determining a layout pattern" which meets a certain criterion. One cannot decide on the patentability of a method step of determining a layout pattern as recited, without first deciding whether the layout pattern as recited is itself novel or unobvious. There is nothing improper in considering structure when the method step is recited in terms of the structure being produced. Applicant also argues that the "C" in the RC time constant of the Chen teaching is not related to the capacitance contributed by the gate electrode. Examiner believes that the total RC time constant is what must be considered in applying the Chen teaching, because if any contribution to the capacitance is not considered, then high frequency operation would be compromised or prevented by the capacitance that is not considered. Gunning and Masuda et al. both teach that gate-to-substrate capacitance would have been known to one of ordinary skill, and would therefore have to be considered as part of the total capacitance of the body link.

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not


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mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to S. Crane, whose telephone number is (703) 308-4894.

The fax phone number for this Group is (703) 308-7722.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist, whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.


Sara W. Crane
Primary Examiner
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